



Kennel/Crate Training: Things You Need to Know

Why?

- Dogs have a natural tendency to curl up in small areas. You can simulate your pet's "*denning*" instinct in your own home using a portable kennel. A portable kennel provides security and comfort at home or during travel and helps control behavioral problems.
- By providing a portable kennel for your dog, you are essentially providing him his own special place where he can always relax and feel safe and secure.
- A portable kennel is the quickest and easiest way to housebreak your dog. Because dogs will not "go" in the area where they eat and sleep, you can train him to potty outside.
- Because dogs can be injured while traveling as passengers in vehicles, a portable kennel is essential for transporting your pet safely in a car or on a plane.
- Portable kennels can be moved from the home to a car, plane or hotel as easy as 1-2-3! Your dog can have his own special place wherever he goes!

When?

- Your puppy's training should begin between 7 and 16 weeks of age. Studies show that the most critical learning period occurs at this time.
- As soon as your new pup arrives, introduce him to his kennel gently and cheerfully. Place a chew toy or treat inside to encourage him to go in on his own. **Never force your puppy inside the kennel.** Be patient and he'll eventually go in on his own. When he does, reward him with lots of praise! It's important that your pet associate his new home with feelings of safety and security from the very beginning.
- Potty training begins at 12 weeks of age and usually takes about 4 weeks to complete.
- Simply decide how you want your pup to behave as an adult dog and teach him to behave that way **now**. Although it is much easier to train a puppy, you can also kennel train an adult dog. Obedience, when taught with kindness and affection, frequently increase any pet's confidence. Once this is established, you are on your way to building a long-lasting and rewarding relationship with your pet – no matter how young or old.

How?

- Choosing the proper kennel size is very important. Your pet should have just enough room to stand up, turn around, and curl up.
- Place an old towel or blanket with your scent on it inside for bedding. **Do not use a dog pad or bed until your puppy has outgrown accidents and chewing.**
- Select a permanent location in your home that provides enough space for the kennel and is in a room full of activity. Your pet will want to enjoy his own special place while still being part of the family.



- Start by keeping the door open and allowing your puppy to get comfortable with going in and out on his own. Next, make him stay in it for a few minutes by restraining him at the door with your hand. Remember to praise him and reward him with a treat! Gradually increase the time. Once he is comfortable with being inside the kennel, you will want to restrain him at the door **with the door closed**. Stay in sight and always praise your pet and reward him with a treat for good behavior.
- This training may take a few hours or days depending on the differences in temperament, sensitivity and breed of your pet. Once he feels secure in the kennel with the door closed, the pup will eventually sit quietly and sleep in his new home.
- **Do not leave a young pup in the portable kennel all day.** Like babies, puppies have to potty every 2–4 hours, most likely right after waking, eating, drinking and playing. At best, a puppy can hold it about 1 hour longer than his age in months. For example, if your puppy is 3 months old, do not leave him in his kennel for more than 4 hours at any given time. Take him outside regularly and praise him when he eliminates. Soon you'll be able to leave the kennel door open all the time.
- If your dog has an accident in his portable kennel, most likely it is either too large or you left him in the kennel too long.
- Never punish your dog by forcing him into the kennel or reprimanding him while he is in it. This is his special place and it should always represent a safe and happy place.
- Always keep 2–3 of your dog's favorite chew toys in the kennel. Chew toys keep him interested in chewing on appropriate objects and discourage a pup's incessant barking by keeping him occupied.
- Be careful not to ruin the effectiveness of the portable kennel by putting your pup in it when he needs to potty. Always take him outside before placing him in the kennel.

**A portable kennel + 2-3 chew toys + dog treats + lots of praise =
a better adjusted and self-confident pet**



Other Helpful Tips:

- During the first few days of training, place the kennel in your bedroom at night to help your pet adjust to his new environment and to alleviate stress.
- Stuff hollow, white sterilized bones with peanut butter, cheese, or a little meat. Two of these healthy treats a day will keep your pup occupied for hours.
- Rotate three or four new toys every three weeks or so—a new smell and feel will keep him interested in chewing on appropriate objects.
- Take your pet to his potty area before placing him in his kennel for travel.
- Never leave your pet unattended in a car.
- If your dog must ride in the back of a pickup truck, be sure the kennel is safely secured so it doesn't slide around.